

Environment: assessment of effects of certain plans and programmes

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Adopting the report by Mr Per Gahrton (Green, S) on the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, Parliament considers that people and property are exposed to considerable risks by poor town and country planning, in particular failure by urban planners to take into account the potential risk involved in building in areas which are liable to flooding in the vicinity of rivers, streams and other water courses. Consequently, it calls for the directive to ensure a high level of environmental protection. To this end it calls for: - clearer expression of the objective of sustainable development; - agriculture, forestry, fishing, the marine environment and recreation to be specifically covered by the directive; - a precise statement of the conditions for public access and participation; - the directive to apply to all cases where projects are likely to have an impact on the environment; - the reasons for a decision not to carry out a strategic environmental assessment to be published; - a statement that alternative solutions must be analysed, including the zero option. Parliament also calls for strategic environmental assessment always to be carried out in respect of the following plans and programmes: - energy programmes, - forestry or agricultural programmes for the growing of crops, intended for the generation of heat and electricity by means of renewable energy sources; - agricultural and livestock development programmes, - hydrological plans, - urban, industrial and livestock waste management plans and programmes, - transport infrastructure development programmes, - tourism development programmes, - urban planning plans and regulations, - transport network programmes, gas pipelines, oil pipelines and high tension electricity power lines. Parliament also advocates that before approving town and country development plans the authorities responsible for town and country planning must carry out a specific study of the risk of flooding in the area concerned in cases where the planned development is located in an area in which water courses may have a significant impact. Urban development plans should also prohibit the construction of dwellings, campsites, farms and items of infrastructure in areas which are liable to flooding. Parliament calls for the Member States to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the environmental protection measures contained in the plans and programmes and to establish appropriate monitoring systems with a view to assessing the effectiveness of the environmental impact corrective measures.